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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL
Duel Between Erdogan and Baykal - Hurriyet
High Tension in the Parliament - Milliyet
FM Gul's Son Saved by an Airbag - Hurriyet
Justice Minister: Be Patient with the Democratic Process for
Articles 301, 305 - Hurriyet
Supreme Court Passes Orhan Pamuk Case to Justice Minister -
Milliyet
Investigation Launched Against Lagendijk - Sabah
KDP Delegation in Ankara - Sabah
Bribery Investigations at Kapikule, GATA and Silopi - Sabah
Peace Agreement between Turkey and Egypt - Milliyet
A New Era with Egypt: Enduring Coordination - Posta
Arinc Nominates 7 Parliamentarians for Nobel Prize - Star
Avian Flu Reported in Igdir - Star
Genocide Accusation for French Military - Vatan

OPINION MAKERS
RTUK Permits Kurdish Language Broadcasting - Radikal
Decision will be Justice Minister Cicek's in Orhan Pamuk
Case - Radikal
Free Trade Agreement Signed between Turkey and Egypt - Zaman
Bribery Operation at Habur Border Gate - Zaman
Baykal Urges Unakitan to Resign - Cumhuriyet
Survey: US is Both a Friend and Enemy of Turkey - Cumhuriyet
Article 301 becomes EU's Problem - Yeni Safak
Avian Flu Reported in Igdir - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

2006 Budget Approval: All papers and TV channels report on escalating tensions in Parliament during 2006 budget debates. While the AKP government tried to paint a rosy picture regarding Turkey's situation, the opposition parties, especially the CHP and its leader Baykal accused the government of corruption and favoritism. "Milliyet" reports that after 19 hours of heated debate, the parliament approved the 2006 budget.

A New Era in the Turkey-Egypt Relationship: "Posta", "Zaman" and "Cumhuriyet" report that a new era started in Turkey-Egypt relations with President Sezer's two-day visit there. "Cumhuriyet" reports that in his statement after the meeting with President Mubarak, President Sezer said that the two countries had to coordinate their efforts for security and stability in the Middle East. The paper adds that Turkey and Egypt signed a free trade agreement yesterday.

Orhan Pamuk Case: "Hurriyet", "Milliyet", "Sabah" and "Radikal" report that the Court of Appeals announced yesterday that they need the Justice Minister's approval to take legal action against those who insulted Turkish identity before June 1 when the new penal code came to effect. "Hurriyet" reports that Justice Minister Cemil Cicek called for patience on the subject of the new penal code and pending cases.

Investigation Launched Against Lagendijk: "Sabah" reports that the Istanbul Prosecutor's Office launched an

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investigation against EU's Lagendijk for insulting the Republic of Turkey as well as its military. "Yeni Safak" says that all cases related to article 301 become an anti-EU campaign and, thus, 301 indirectly becomes the EU's problem. The investigation against Lagendijk as well will be conducted under articles 301 and 288.

KDP Delegation in Ankara: "Sabah", "Cumhuriyet" and "Radikal" report that a delegation from the Iraqi Kurdistan Party (KDP) was in Ankara yesterday for the first talks between Turkish officials and Iraqi Kurds since Iraqi elections earlier this month.

RTUK Permission for Kurdish Broadcasting: "Radikal" and "Aksam" report that RTUK (Radio and Television High Commission) gave permission to 12 private radio and TV stations to broadcast in Kurdish. "Aksam" says that RTUK ruled that the broadcasts should not last more than 45 minutes a day nor total more than 4 hours in a week.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iran

"Troublemaking Comrades"
Abdulhamit Bilici observed in the Islamist-intellectual "Zaman" (12/28): "Turkey is surrounded by careless figures, and this reinforces the importance of our own domestic stability. One of the troublemakers right next door is Saddam, currently on trial. The entire region and later the entire world suffered for years because of his troublesome policies. A close, cold-blooded analysis of the recent events would prove that Saddam Hussein laid the ground work for the position of both the PKK and Al Qaeda today. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was the beginning of the US presence in the region. As for the PKK, one should never forget that the PKK managed to put down roots in the north of Iraq once Saddam lost control of the region. Another immediate neighbor, Syria, is no different. We should remember that Assad's father hosted the leader of the PKK in Syria for 14 years. The Syrian occupation of Lebanon under the pretext of stopping civil war resulted in the Bekaa valley becoming a base for terrorist organizations. The new Assad regime

has been very sympathetic to Turkey, but there are some inherited problems related to Lebanon which seem to be a very big headache for Damascus. Finally, the harsh statements from the Iranian leader have caused more speculation regarding a possible American operation. It seems Turkey is on a road filled with reckless drivers. We had better ask if we can really trust Iranian companionship on this road trip."

"The Iranian Deadlock"

Sami Kohen commented in the mainstream daily "Milliyet" (12/28): "The world community is more concerned about Iran's nuclear program than the radical statements against Israel. There is international consensus regarding the need to stop the Iranian nuclear program. That means there is a common perception that Iran is capable of producing an atomic bomb if it starts a uranium enrichment program. The character and behavior of the leaders of the Iranian regime are creating more concern for the world. It remains to be seen whether Iran will choose to compromise with the world. If consensus cannot be reached, most likely the US will force the United Nations into imposing sanctions. It is also not out of the question to see a targeted operation against Iran by Israel. These are certainly radical scenarios and hopefully international diplomacy will prevail before a serious crisis knocks at the door. Otherwise, Turkey will find itself in a very difficult situation."

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